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**ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA, WAIS INC. ANNOUNCE  
JOINT DEVELOPMENT AND MARKETING AGREEMENT**

**New Platform with Powerful Natural Language Searching Capabilities  
Merges Expertise of Both Companies**

**CHICAGO, March 14, 1995** -- Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., publisher of the leading encyclopedia in the English language, today announced an agreement with Wide Area Information Servers (WAIS) Inc. in which the two companies will market new database searching technology that significantly improves information retrieval on the Internet.

Under the agreement, Britannica and WAIS Inc., the Internet publishing specialists located in Menlo Park, Calif., both have the right to market technology developed by Encyclopædia Britannica's Advanced Technology Group that has significantly enhanced the original WAIS search-and-retrieval engine. According to both companies, discussions are open for further technology sharing in the future.

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The new search-and-retrieval engine, developed by Britannica in cooperation with WAIS Inc., optimizes the original WAIS engine, producing an improvement in efficiency of up to twenty percent. These enhancements form the core of Britannica's powerful, new electronic publishing platform and have been incorporated into the current WAIS Inc. system.

In addition to improved search-and-retrieval capabilities, Britannica's enhancements to the WAIS Inc. engine include greater efficiency and CD-ROM support.

"WAIS has provided a liberating technology for publishers," said Joseph J. Esposito, president of Encyclopædia Britannica North America. "It enables content owners to take control of their own destiny by giving them direct access to distribution on the Internet."

"Britannica has quickly established itself as one of the few traditional publishers with a deep understanding of wide-area networks," said WAIS Inc. President Brewster Kahle. "They have developed technology as sophisticated as the famous encyclopedia itself. For us, this partnership means sharing sophisticated searching technology developed by the world's knowledge experts while advancing our mission to populate the Internet with 'branded' databases of WAIS-enabled, high-quality information."

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"System Britannica," the publishing platform that incorporates the new searching technology, serves as the infrastructure for Britannica's electronic products, including Britannica CD 2.0, to be released this summer, and Britannica Online, an Internet-based, on-line information service. Britannica Online was named Database magazine's 1994 "Product of the Year."

For Britannica, the WAIS partnership is part of an effort to provide customers with easier and faster access to Britannica's vast encyclopedic database. In pursuing this effort, Britannica has concentrated on providing high-quality information and easy access to it rather than sound and video. The company's electronic products incorporate several advanced information retrieval features, including: natural-language searching, which allows the user to enter a question such as "Why does the moon loom larger on the horizon?" and receive a list of articles ranked according to their relevance to the query; and an elaborate system of "hypertext" links that make it easy to move back and forth between related entries in the database.

WAIS Inc. will incorporate the new technology into the search engine of its WAISserver publishing system. WAISserver enables publishers to index and publish large databases of electronic information over wide-area networks such as the Internet, where they can be searched with natural-language commands.

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Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., in addition to publishing the foremost encyclopedia in the English language, is also a pioneer in electronic publishing. The company provides access to its database of 44 million words through Britannica CD, Britannica Online, and the Britannica Instant Research System, as well as through its famous 32-volume printed set. Britannica's home page on the Internet's World-Wide Web is located at URL: <http://www.eb.com>.

Through its international group, the company markets products in virtually every country in the world. Britannica or its licensees will soon have published major portions of the Encyclopædia Britannica in 10 foreign languages, and three other foreign-language encyclopedias have also been developed in cooperation with EB. In addition, the company offers English language teaching products and programs in several overseas markets.

Encyclopædia Britannica Educational Corporation is a leading developer and distributor of interactive, multimedia core curriculum products for grades K-8.

The company's Merriam-Webster division publishes Merriam-Webster's Collegiate® Dictionary, the world's best-selling hardcover English-language dictionary, soon to be available in electronic form.

WAIS Inc. was founded in 1992 by leaders of the original WAIS consortium consisting of Thinking Machines, Dow Jones, KPMG, and Apple Computer. The company develops and markets the WAISserver and creates custom on-line services for publishers such as Encyclopædia Britannica, Dow Jones, and CMP

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Publications. WAIS Inc.'s mission is twofold: to develop publishing tools and services for distributing information over the Internet and to improve the quality of the information published there. The company can be reached by E-mail at [info@wais.com](mailto:info@wais.com). The WAIS Inc. home page is located at URL: <http://www.wais.com>.

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